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## **Obey: Iraq, Appropriations, and the Need for Compromise**

WASHINGTON – The President continues to hold press conferences to complain that bills have not been enacted, even as he continues to refuse to work with Congress on reasonable compromises.

Dave Obey (D-WI), Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, issued the following response:

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“The impression the President is trying to leave on the remaining appropriations bills is as misleading as the impression he was leaving on Iran’s nuclear weapons plans.

“Despite the President’s assertions, the Congress has:

1. “Already provided a \$50 billion supplemental for the troops immediate needs - the only thing stopping these funds from reaching the troops is the President’s refusal to compromise on that legislation;
2. “Already sent appropriations to the White House covering 2/3 of discretionary spending, but the President vetoed the Labor-Health-Education bill that the Congress passed on a bi-partisan basis;
3. “Repeatedly asked the Administration to negotiate a resolution to these differences, but we have received no response; and, as a result,
4. “Started moving forward on a plan to meet the President halfway, with a bill that splits the difference, that we will take to the floor next week. It would have been helpful to have had the Administration’s input, but we have done what we can by working with Congressional Republicans.

“We are doing everything in our power to meet the needs of this nation. We wish the Administration would do the same.”

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## **“Why wouldn’t you sit down and try to seriously negotiate?”**

### **The President Should Take His Own Advice and Work With Congress on Appropriations Bills**

Today, during a White House Press Conference, President Bush asked aloud “Why wouldn’t you sit down and try to seriously negotiate?” to finish work on bills.

That’s a good question. Congress has repeatedly asked the White House to compromise on appropriations bills.

1. In September Chairman [Obey met with Jim Nussle](#), the President’s budget director, and asked him if they could work together. Nussle said he couldn’t find anyone at the White House interested in compromise.
2. In November, Chairman Obey went to the [National Press Club](#) to call on the White House to negotiate.
3. Later that week, Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Reid [sent a letter](#) to the President asking him to work out a compromise on the appropriations bills.
4. To date, the White House has refused to work with the Congress on a compromise.

The President should work with Congress on a reasonable compromise.